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WHO DO YOU TRUST?
04.2008

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# AVENGERS
## THE INITIATIVE

# ONE WILL DIE!

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DIRECT EDITION

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# AVENGERS THE INITIATIVE

AFTER STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT WAS DESTROYED DURING A TELEVISED FIGHT BETWEEN THE NEW WARRIORS AND A GROUP OF DANGEROUS VILLAINS, A FEDERAL SUPERHUMAN REGISTRATION ACT WAS PASSED. ALL INDIVIDUALS POSSESSING PARANORMAL ABILITIES MUST NOW REGISTER WITH THE GOVERNMENT. TONY STARK, A.K.A. IRON MAN, HAS BEEN APPOINTED DIRECTOR OF S.H.I.E.L.D., THE INTERNATIONAL PEACEKEEPING FORCE. HE HAS SET IN MOTION THE INITIATIVE, A PLAN FOR TRAINING AND POLICING SUPER HEROES IN THIS BRAVE NEW WORLD, INTENDED TO POSITION A LOCAL SUPER HERO TEAM IN EACH OF AMERICA'S FIFTY STATES.

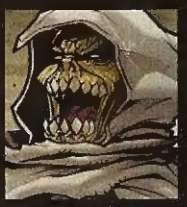
## STAFF

JUSTICE

HENRY PETER GYRICH

BARON VON BLITZSCHLAG

THE GAUNTLET


TASKMASTER

## TRAINEES

HARDBALL

KOMODO

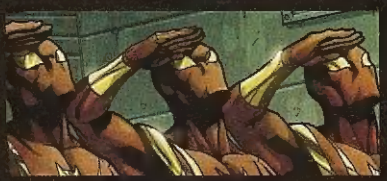
ANT-MAN

CLOUD NINE

MVP

SLAPSTICK

RAGE


SCARLET SPIDERS

ULTRAGIRL

DEBRII

When a training exercise goes awry, MVP, the most promising trainee in the Initiative, is killed. All those present in the room during the accident are told the incident never happened. However, Baron Von Blitzschlag, chief scientist at Camp Hammond, has secretly cloned MVP successfully four times. One of the clones has taken the place of the original Michael Van Patrick at home, and the other three now serve as the high-flying Scarlet Spiders.

But now things seem to have gone all wrong. When the dangerous weapon called the Tactigon is given to a fifth MVP clone, the clone turns into the murderous KIA and is determined to annihilate all those responsible for the original MVP's death. KIA cuts a swath through Camp Hammond, felling Yellowjacket, Trauma and Thor Girl and injuring many others. Meanwhile, the comatose Gauntlet's gauntlet seems to awake with a mind of its own, taking its host out of his hospital bed to fight KIA...

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New York.
A Few Years Ago.
After A Failed Badoon Invasion.
ULTRAGIRL, SLAPSTICK. I JUST WANT TO LET YOU TO KNOW HOW MUCH THE TEAM APPRECIATED YOUR HELP ON THIS ONE. WE COULDN'T HAVE STOPPED THESE GUYS WITHOUT YOU.
WE'VE TALKED IT OVER AND WE'D LIKE TO INVITE YOU TO BECOME FULL MEMBERS OF THE NEW WARRIORS.
REALLY, JUSTICE? I MEAN, I ALWAYS HOPED THAT YOU WOULD WANT ME TO--
I MEAN, THAT ALL OF YOU WOULD WANT ME TO JOIN...
COOL BEANS! DO WE GET SECRET DECODER RINGS?
NO, BUT YOU DO GET COMMUNICATORS.
AND I CAN CALL YOU? WHENEVER?
CONGRATULATIONS, CLOWN BOY.
SO, NAMORITA? IS THIS LIKE MEMBERSHIP WITH PRIVILEGES?!
NITA!
WHY YOU--!
SLAPSTICK, CUT IT OUT! THEY JUST MADE YOU A NEW WARRIOR! START ACTING LIKE ONE!

Camp Hammond, Cadet Barracks Bravo. Three Days Ago.
THIS IS MY SUPER SOAKER. THERE ARE MANY LIKE IT. BUT THIS ONE IS MINE! I CALL HER SHIRLEY.
SLAPSTICK! STEVE! WILL YOU GROW UP ALREADY! DEBRII WAS SAYING SOMETHING.
IT'S OKAY, ULTRAGIRL. I JUST IGNORE HIM. LISTEN, WE ALL SAW JUSTICE TAKE OFF WITH CLOUD 9...
AND EVERYBODY KNOWS SHE CAME BACK--AND HE DIDN'T. THE RUMOR IS HE'S GONE ROGUE. AND NOW EVERYBODY'S LOOKING AT US.
ALL I'M SAYIN' IS IT'S NOT A GOOD TIME TO BE AN EX-NEW WARRIOR.
THAT'S MY FAULT. EVERYONE THINKS IT WAS ME WHO BEAT THE GAUNTLET INTO A COMA.
IT'S ONLY A MATTER A' TIME BEFORE THEY WASH ME OUT, USE THE S.P.I.N. TECH TO TAKE MY POWERS AWAY, OR THROW ME IN JAIL.
UM, RAGE, ABOUT THAT... FUNNY STORY, Y'SEE I...
I SWEAR, I EVER CATCH THE GUY WHO REALLY DID IT...
...I'LL BEAT THE LIVING @#%* OUT A' HIM!
YOIKS!
C'MON, GUYS. THIS'S ALL IN YOUR MINDS. THERE'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.
MS. MARVEL JUST PUT ME IN CHARGE OF THE JUNIOR GUARDSMEN PROGRAM*. THAT WOULDN'T'VE HAPPENED IF THEY DIDN'T TRUST US.
*IN NEW WARRIORS #7 --TOM
OKAY. HERE'S THE THING. THERE'S SOMETHING I GOTTA TELL YOU.
HOLD UP, I THINK SLAPSTICK'S ACTUALLY GOT SOMETHING TO SAY. WHAT IS IT, STEVE?
IT WAS ME WHO--
BEEP BEEP
"BEEP BEEP?" WHAT AM I, A ROADRUNNER?

HANG ON. THERE'S SOMETHING IN MY PANTS--AND FOR ONCE, THAT'S NOT THE SETUP TO A JOKE.
IT'S COMING FROM MY INFINITE POCKETS. GIVE ME A SEC HERE.
NOPE...
BEEP BEEP
NOPE... THAT'S WEIRD, I DON'T EVEN LIKE PINEAPPLES...
SWEET! I CAN USE THIS!
BEEP BEEP
HERE WE GO. I WAS WONDERING WHERE THAT WAS!
W
BEEP BE--
KLIK
SLAPSTICK, IS THAT YOU? THIS IS JUSTICE!
I KNEW YOUR INFINITE POCKETS COULD BYPASS INITIATIVE SECURITY.
I CAN'T TALK LONG OR THE CAMP'S SYSTEMS WILL TRACE MY SIGNAL. LISTEN... THERE ARE THINGS GOING ON WE NEVER SUSPECTED. I CAN'T GO INTO DETAIL, BUT IT'S ABOUT MVP.
I NEED YOU TO TRUST ME. I NEED YOU TO GO AWOL AS QUIETLY AS YOU CAN... AND MEET ME IN TENNESSEE.

Camp Hammond
Cadet Barracks Bravo.
Now.
STUPID CLOUD! FASTER, C'MON!
GOTTA ROUND UP THE TROOPS! GET REINFORCEMENTS!
GUYS! IT'S AN EMERGENCY! SOUND THE ALARMS! ARM YOURSELVES AND FOLLOW ME!
SOMETHING BIG IS GOING ON DOWN IN THE LOWER LEVELS! AND WE'RE GONNA NEED EVERY LAST ONE OF...
...YOU?
GUYS? HARDBALL? RAGE? ANYONE HERE? MAYBE THEY'RE ALL ON THE GIRLS' SIDE...
ULTRAGIRL? KOMO--MO--MO
OH MY GOD!
CLOUD 9! GET OUT!
OH BOY.
LISTEN, IT'S NOT WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE! WE WEREN'T... FRATERNIZING, OR WHATEVER IT IS YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO DO.
WHAT DID YOU SEE, YOU LITTLE SNEAK? AND WHAT WERE YOU DOING SPYING ON US?
I DIDN'T SEE ANYTHING, KOMODO! AND Y'KNOW WHAT? IT DOESN'T MATTER!
WE'RE UNDER ATTACK! SOMETHING'S RUNNING AROUND IN THE SUBBASEMENTS, AND FROM THE SOUND OF THINGS...

"...IT'S GONNA TAKE AN ARMY TO STOP IT!"
GHOOM
SERGEANT JOSEPH GREEN, A.K.A. THE GAUNTLET! YOU'RE ON MY LIST!
YOU GAVE THE ORDERS! BECAUSE OF YOU, THIS WEAPON KILLED ME!
I WAS... I AM KIA! KILLED IN ACTION!
SHOW YOURSELF, SOLDIER! GAUNTLET...
REEENKKK
"...WHERE ARE YOU?!"

The War Room.
LISTEN UP! IF YOU DON'T SHOW ME SOME PROGRESS IN THE NEXT THIRTY SECONDS, I'LL TRANSFER ALL OF YOUR FAT CARCASSES TO ANTARCTICA!
NOW CLEAR THAT CRAP OFF OF MY SCREEN AND GET ME AN IMAGE!
SECRETARY GYRICH, WE'RE GETTING A VISUAL.
GOOD.
IT'S--WE DIDN'T DO ANYTHING, SIR. IT HAPPENED ON ITS OWN. AND SIR? THAT LOOKS LIKE...WELL... IT LOOKS LIKE MVP, SIR--
WHERE'S IT COMING FROM?! GET ME A LOCATION STAT!
HENRY PETER GYRICH.
YOU'RE ON MY LIST.
SIR! HE'S ON THE FLOOR! HE'S RIGHT OUTSIDE THE--
KRASSHH
THIS IS GYRICH! I AM UNDER ATTACK!
ASSEMBLE MY PERSONAL GUARD! SCRAMBLE TO THIS LOCATION! DO YOU HEAR ME? GET ME...

"...THE SHADOW INITIATIVE! NOW!
HEY, BENGAL, SINCE WHEN ARE WE GYRICH'S "PERSONAL GUARD"? I SIGNED ON TO AN ELITE STRIKE FORCE, NOT A BABYSITTER'S CLUB!
FOCUS ON THE MATTER AT HAND, CONSTRICTOR.
HEY, DO I LOOK LIKE I'M SLACKING? OFF? HELL WE'LL PROBABLY BE THE FIRST ONES...
...THERE?
THE SCARLET SPIDERS AND MUTANT ZERO.
HMM. THIS DOES NOT BODE WELL. PREPARE YOURSELF, MY FRIEND.
IF GYRICH HAS ACTIVATED HER, THINGS MUST BE... SERIOUS.
The Combat Simulator.
UNFF. NOT THAT I DIDN'T ENJOY BEING PINNED UNDER GEIGER, BUT WHEN A SUPER BABE'S BUILT LIKE A BRICK HOUSE, CHANCES ARE SHE WEIGHS AS MUCH!
SO, TASKMASTER... ANYBODY ELSE STILL ALIVE?
EVERYBODY WORTH MENTIONING.
AHH...MY HAND...
AND CRUSADER.
BEEP BEEP BEEP
WHAT'S ALL THE BEEPING?
IT'S AN EMERGENCY CALL TO ARMS.
YOU GONNA ANSWER IT?
NAH.
I HEAR THAT.
HEY. I GOT TWO EPISODES OF "CHUCK" ON MY IPOD.
Y'KNOW SOMETHING, ANT-MAN, YOU'RE GOOD PEOPLE.

The War Room
SHUK
SNIKT
SLIKT
SLAK
KIA
GYRICH.
NOW WOULD BE A GOOD TIME.
LIVES ARE COMMODITIES TO YOU. THINGS TO USE. AND THEN TOSS ASIDE LIKE GARBAGE.
OR, IN MY CASE, SOMETHING TO BE RECYCLED. BUT WHEN I'M DONE WITH YOU...
NOW, DAMN IT!
THERE WON'T BE ENOUGH LEFT TO BURY!
NOW!
FWIP
WHAT?!
RELAX, GYRICH. I'VE GOT CAPTAIN SHIRTLESS HERE ALL WRAPPED UP.

CAN'T BELIEVE YOU CALLED IN THE BIG GUNS FOR JUST ONE GUY!
CONSTRICTOR, YOU IDIOT! HE'S GOT THE TACTIGON! THE ARMORY WEAPON!
IT CAN BECOME ANY WEAPON IN THE UNIVERSE! IT COULD BE--
RAZOR WIRE!
OW! IT'S RIPPING INTO MY--
AUGH!
FRANK!
ENOUGH! LOOK AFTER HIM.
WE'LL DEAL WITH THIS.
HE'LL LISTEN TO US. AFTER ALL...

...WE'RE ALL ONE AND THE SAME. CLOSER THAN BROTHERS.
WE SHARE THE SAME MIND. AND WE CAN PROMISE YOU...
...EVERYTHING'S GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT.
THREE. MORE MICHAEL VAN PATRICKS. NOT...NOT UNIQUE.
THAT'S RIGHT. WE'RE ALL ALIKE, AND WE UNDERSTAND HOW YOU--
NO!
MICHAEL VAN PATRICK IS DEAD. IF YOU'RE MVP TOO--
--THEN YOU'RE DEAD--
SHING
--KILLED IN ACTION!
SHUNK

ZAK
ZAK ZAK
MUTANT ZERO, WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING? GET ME OUT OF HERE!
SHH.
WE ARE NOT HERE. HE CANNOT SEE US. WE ARE NOT HERE. HE CANNOT SEE US...
GYRICH! WHERE ARE YOU?
YOU CAN'T HIDE FROM ME! YOU'RE ON MY LIST!
WAIT...
...YOU'RE RIGHT, TACTIGON. ONE OF THEM IS CLOSE.
KROOOM
KNOCK KNOCK!

NOW I UNDERSTAND. THAT'S NOT YOU IN THERE, IS IT, SERGEANT GREEN? YOUR GAUNTLET'S TAKEN OVER!
LET'S SEE WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I CHOP IT OFF.
Yellowjacket's Lab.
HNHH...
KRZZ
BANISH YOUR VEAKNESS, OLD MAN. YOUR POWERS HAFF NOT COMPLETELY FADED... USE THEM.
AH. NOW LET US SEE...
...NEIN.
MEIN KINDER... MY DEAR BOYS...

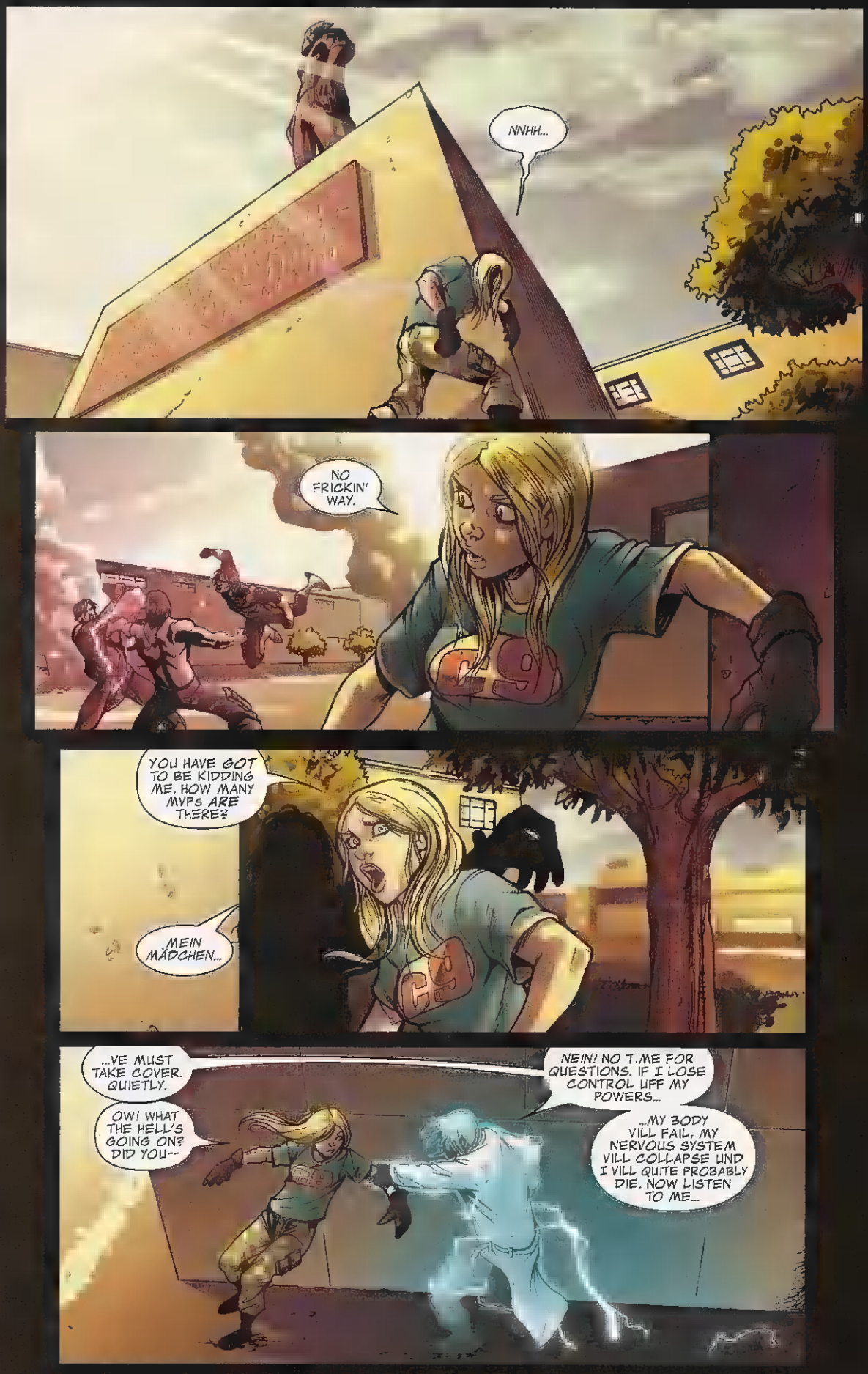
FEH! I AM BARON VON BLITZSCHLAG, UND I HAFF SEEN FAR VORSE. THIS IS NO TIME TO VEEP LIKE A LITTLE GIRL.
IF THE INITIATIVE IS TO SURVIVE... THERE IS YORK TO BE DONE.
The War Room.
KRAKOOM
KRAKOOM
KRAKOOM!

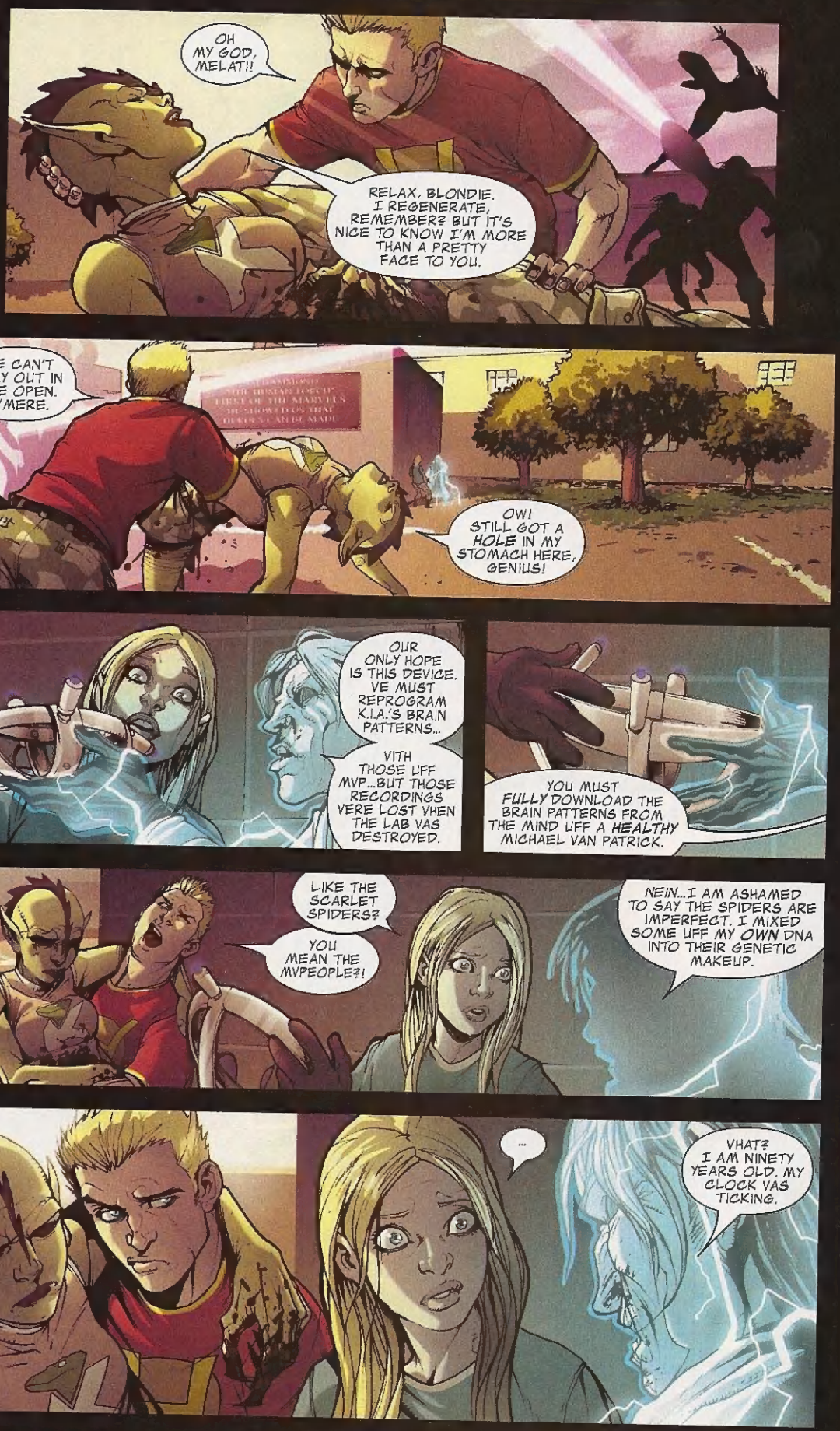
KA-BOOM
...
I KNOW YOU.
CLOUD 9. KOMODO. HARDBALL.
YOU'RE ON MY LIST.
IS THAT...
MVP? BUT HE'S DEAD!
STOP ACTING LIKE ROOKIES. SO IT'S ANOTHER MVP--I SEE THIS ALL THE TIME! GET OVER IT!
I'LL TAKE POINT--FOLLOW MY LEAD!
CH-CHK

FIRE!!
ALL OF YOU! KILLED IN ACTION!!
ZAK
ZAK
ZAK
Outside Camp.
WE'RE ALL GONNA DIE!
I KNEW THIS WOULD HAPPEN! THEY HAD TO PUT THIS BASE IN OUR CITY.
SHUT UP AND RUN!
AHH
ZAK
ARGH!
HNGH!
ZAK
KILLED... IN...ACTION!
BRRRT

GUH!
ENOUGH. I WANT TO KILL JOSEPH GREEN, NOT SOME ALIEN WEAPON PULLING HIS STRINGS.
TIME TO WAKE UP, SOLDIER.
SHUNK
WH-WHERE--

WHERE AM I? WHAT'S--
OH, NO.
KOMODO... CLOUD 9... WHAT HAPPENED?
YOU HAPPENED!
THIS IS YOUR FAULT. I EXIST BECAUSE OF YOU!
WHAM
SERGEANT JOSEPH GREEN, A.K.A. THE GAUNTLET! KILLED IN--
NO!!
YOU'RE NOT LIKE US! YOU KILLED--
--OUR BROTHER! AND NOW IT'S TIME--
--FOR YOU TO DIE!


NNHH...
NO FRICKIN' WAY.
YOU HAVE GOT TO BE KIDDING ME. HOW MANY MVPs ARE THERE?
MEIN MÄDCHEN...
...VE MUST TAKE COVER. QUIETLY.
OW! WHAT THE HELL'S GOING ON? DID YOU--
NEIN! NO TIME FOR QUESTIONS. IF I LOSE CONTROL UFF MY POWERS...
...MY BODY VILL FAIL, MY NERVOUS SYSTEM VILL COLLAPSE UND I VILL QUITE PROBABLY DIE. NOW LISTEN TO ME...


OH MY GOD, MELAT!!
RELAX, BLONDIE. I REGENERATE, REMEMBER? BUT IT'S NICE TO KNOW I'M MORE THAN A PRETTY FACE TO YOU.
WE CAN'T STAY OUT IN THE OPEN. C'MERE.
OW! STILL GOT A HOLE IN MY STOMACH HERE, GENIUS!
OUR ONLY HOPE IS THIS DEVICE. VE MUST REPROGRAM K.I.A.'S BRAIN PATTERNS...
VITH THOSE UFF MVP...BUT THOSE RECORDINGS VERE LOST VHEN THE LAB VAS DESTROYED.
YOU MUST FULLY DOWNLOAD THE BRAIN PATTERNS FROM THE MIND UFF A HEALTHY MICHAEL VAN PATRICK.
LIKE THE SCARLET SPIDERS?
YOU MEAN THE MVPEOPLE?!
NEIN...I AM ASHAMED TO SAY THE SPIDERS ARE IMPERFECT. I MIXED SOME UFF MY OWN DNA INTO THEIR GENETIC MAKEUP.
...
VHAT? I AM NINETY YEARS OLD. MY CLOCK VAS TICKING.

FOR THIS TO VORK, YOU VILL NEED THE REAL MVP.
THE REAL--?
BUT HE'S DEAD. YOU HAD HIS BODY IN YOUR LAB.

UND HOW DID YOU KNOW THAT, JUENGLING?
THAT'S NOT IMPORTANT! HOW DO WE FIND MVP?
YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT THE ONE WHO LIVES WITH HIS DAD, RIGHT? HE WAS IN KENTUCKY. BUT NOW HE'S GONE!

SUCH VELL-INFORMED CHILDREN. BUT YOUR ELDERS HAFF TRICKS OF THEIR OWN.
I HAD A CHIP IMPLANTED INTO HERR VAN PATRICK. THIS TRACKER VILL LEAD YOU DIRECTLY TO HIM.

WE'VE GOT TO MAKE A RUN FOR THE NEGATIVE ZONE JUMP GATE. IT'S THE ONLY WAY WE CAN GET TO MVP IN TIME.
GREAT.
THAT'S ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COMPOUND. WE'LL NEED COVER. I'LL USE MY CLOUDS LIKE A SMOKE-SCREEN...
I CAN TAKE THE POINT, TRY TO BLOCK ANY FIRE. IF I'M HIT, I SHOULD BE ABLE TO REGENERATE MOST DAMAGE.
I DON'T LIKE IT, BUT I DON'T HAVE ANY BETTER IDEAS. ON MY MARK...

GO!!

Outside Bulls Gap, Tennessee.
I DUNNO, DAD. THINK WE'VE GOT ENOUGH SUPPLIES?
OR DO YOU PLAN ON HAVING THE WHOLE TOWN OVER FOR DINNER?
OH, PLEASE.
WHAT? THERE'S ENOUGH FOOD BACK HERE TO LAST 'TIL THE END OF THE WORLD!
IT'S NOT AS MUCH AS YOU THINK, MICHAEL. REMEMBER, IT'S NOT JUST THE TWO OF US ANYMORE--
NOW!
DAD!
SORRY, MICHAEL. THERE'S NO TIME TO EXPLAIN...
I WISH WE DIDN'T HAVE TO DO THIS. THE BARON SAID THIS MIGHT WIPE OUT YOUR MEMORIES...
...BUT WE DON'T HAVE A CHOICE.
UMF!
IT'S FOR THE GREATER GOOD.
NO!

I'M SICK OF HEARING ABOUT THE GREATER GOOD.
KZAKK
C9
ESPECIALLY FROM THE INITIATIVE.
WHAM
BECAUSE THAT USUALLY MEANS IT'S A LIE.
KONK
FROM NOW ON, WE FIGHT FOR WHAT'S RIGHT...
NEW WARRIORS
STYLE.
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND... HE'S COMING...
"HE?" WHAT'S SHE TALKING ABOUT?
DOESN'T MATTER. WHATEVER IT IS... AIN'T NOTHING WE CAN'T HANDLE.
KILLED IN ACTION
PART 3 OF 4: CONFIRMED KILLS
DAN SLOTT & CHRISTOS N. GAGE WRITERS
STEFANO CASELLI ARTIST
DANIELE RUDONI COLOR ART
VC'S JOE CARAMAGNA LETTERER
MOLLY LAZER ASST. EDITOR
TOM BREVOORT EDITOR
JOE QUESADA EDITOR IN CHIEF
DAN BUCKLEY PUBLISHER
To Be Concluded!